PRAESIDIUM

Strengthening reception capacity in respect of mixed migration flows
Lampedusa on the Map
PRAESIDIUM in phases

- **August 2005:**
  Ministry of Interior invites the Italian Red Cross (CRI), IOM and UNHCR to establish a permanent presence in Lampedusa.

- **Autumn 2005:**
  CRI, IOM and UNHCR negotiate with MOI terms of reference.

- **November 2005:**
  MOI submits application for funds under ARGO budget line.

- **March 2006:**
  Start of the project in Lampedusa.

- **June 2007:**
  Praesidium II creates a roving team to follow up on Lampedusa activities and monitor landings in Sicily.

- **May 2008:**
  Praesidium III extends the interagency intervention to the south of Italy and Sardinia.
PRAESIDIUM: who’s who?

Co-funded by:

• EU Commission (ARGO budget line)
• Italian Ministry of Interior

Jointly implemented by:

• UNHCR
• IOM
• Italian Red Cross
Objectives of UNHCR in Lampedusa

- Development of an integrated interagency approach (MOI, UNHCR, IOM, CRI, etc.)
- Better understanding of the sea arrivals phenomenon in the lower Mediterranean sea.
- Additional information on the asylum procedure from potential asylum seekers
- Increased awareness about protection by border officials / staff of the reception centre
The reception cycle (1)

Arrival at the pier

- A ‘warning system’ informs all humanitarian agencies about arrivals. UNHCR, IOM and CRI reach the pier.

- Migrants are rescued and escorted by Coast Guard or Tax and Customs Police to the pier. The medical NGO MSF performs a first check up.

- Women, minors and families are separated from the rest of the group.

- UNHCR collects basic information and gives general orientation.
Arrival at the reception center

- Migrants are transferred to the reception center.
- Transportation is granted by the management of the center, ‘Lampedusa Accoglienza’
- Upon arrival a specific medical check up is performed to detect eventual contagious diseases
- Field officers of the three organisations inform the migrants on the identification procedure
- Following the pre-identification, Lampedusa Accoglienza staff distributes personal kits (clothes, hygienic items, phonecards, etc.)
The reception cycle (3)

Identification

- **Pre-identification:**
  Each individual is to provide personal details to the immigration police. A picture is taken against a white background. All registered migrants are issued an identification number. Self-declared unaccompanied minors are separated: their age will be ascertained later through X-Rays.

- UNHCR, IOM and CRI are not authorized to take part in the identification procedure, but are able to monitor the process by staying in a close range.

- **In-depth identification (‘foto-segnalamento’):**
  The in-depth identification is performed by the ‘scientific department’ of the police. Additional pictures and fingerprints are taken. All personal information is filed, stored in a data-base and shared with immigration authorities in other EU countries (through EURODAC system).
Stay at the center

- Accommodation is separate for males, women and minors. Family units are given the possibility to meet regularly during their stay.
- Migrants hosted at the reception center receive three daily meals.
- Guests of the center have access to the health assistance made available by Lampedusa Accoglienza. Individual cases are referred to the local health center for specialized medical assistance.
- Social workers, psychologists, cultural mediators and interpreters are present at the centre.
- The stay is supposed to be rather short (2/3 days). However, migrants may remain for longer periods.
Departure

- Special flights are organised to transfer migrants to other centers on the Italian territory.
- Migrants to be transferred to Sicily are escorted by ferry to Agrigento, where they will be further distributed. Among them are UAMs.
- Before the departure, UNHCR reminds the migrants of the possibility to apply for asylum in the next reception centers.
Protection Concerns

- **Interception/interdiction at sea:**
  1. actual risks for human lives
  2. refoulement
  3. SAR vs. interdiction

- **Libya not a safe third country for asylum seekers**
  1. police abuses (e.g. detention conditions)
  2. human rights violations
  3. SGBV
  4. deportations

- **Effective access to the asylum procedure**
  1. Information on the possibility to apply for asylum
  2. Rejection/expulsion

- **Most vulnerable categories:**
  1. Women
  2. Children
  3. Survivors of shipwrecks
UNHCR activities in Lampedusa (1)

- to receive migrants upon arrival at the pier
- to liaise with local authorities engaged in rescue operations (Coast Guard and Tax and Customs Police)
UNHCR activities in Lampedusa (2)

- to provide information on asylum
- to conduct individual and group counseling
- to collect COOs and COTs information
UNHCR activities in Lampedusa (3)

- to identify extremely vulnerable cases
- to refer specific protection concerns to roving team in Sicily & UNHCR representatives in the territorial commissions
- to facilitate submission of applications for asylum to the competent authorities
Sea arrivals: asylum in figures

Total number asylum seekers in Italy in 2007: 14,000

Asylum applications from persons who arrived by sea: approx. 50%
(57% gained some form of protection)

In 2007 sea arrivals in Italy were 20,000. Out of them, 12,000 arrived in Lampedusa.
## Lampedusa arrivals 2007: main nationalities

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<th>Minors</th>
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Protection impact

- Preventing refoulement
- Early identification of protection concerns
- Facilitation of submission of asylum applications at early stage (1170 applicants in 2007)
- Increased awareness from competent authorities on asylum related matters
- Referral of extremely vulnerable cases to roving team in Sicily / territorial commissions
- Study visits/fact-finding missions
THANK YOU